



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Workshop for SSVF Grant

[WEBINAR AUDIO LINK](#)

***Submissions due by 4:00 pm Eastern Time on
February 22, 2019***

******Late submissions cannot be accepted******



- I. Scoring Criteria
- II. Funding Opportunity (NOFA Section I)
- III. Award Information (NOFA Section II)
- IV. Submitting the Application and Required Materials



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

I. Scoring Criteria



Application Review Threshold Requirements

Threshold requirements:

- A. Application is submitted on time and is complete
- B. Applicant is a non-profit organization or consumer cooperative
- C. Proposed activities are eligible for funding
- D. Proposed participants are eligible to receive supportive services
- E. Applicant agrees to comply with the requirements in the Final Rule
- F. Applicant does not have an outstanding obligation to the Federal government that is in arrears and does not have an overdue or unsatisfactory response to an audit
- G. Applicant is not in default by failing to meet the requirements for any previous Federal assistance



- **Application must meet threshold requirements**
 - Applicants must receive at least 75 cumulative points and at least one point per category to receive a supportive services grant.
- **Funding is not automatic with qualifying score.**
- **Funds must be geographically dispersed to support broad access with higher concentrations of resources in areas of high need.**



P1 & P2 Application Review Scoring Criteria

Scoring Criteria for Applications Submitted Under Priorities 1 & 2 (Renewals)

Section	Points	Elements
A. Program Outcomes	55	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Housing Stability•Ending Homelessness•Homelessness Prevention•Participant Satisfaction•Program Implementation and Progress•Community Planning
B. Cost-Effectiveness	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Cost per Household•Program Budget and Expenditures
C. Compliance with Program Goals and Requirements	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•SSVF Program Goals•Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines•Grant Agreement



Section A Scoring: Program Outcomes

Section A has highest point value, worth 55 points.

- The VA is funding these programs to end homelessness among Veterans so our primary focus is on outcomes. *What did you achieve?*
- Critical to provide answer with data demonstrating effectiveness in meeting objectives in grant proposal.

Explain results

- Demonstrate program's effectiveness in reducing homelessness and promoting housing stability.
- Detail how proposed modifications will improve program interventions.
 - Programs that are a combination of one or more grants from the prior fiscal year may report on the combined results. Please describe within narrative responses.



Section B Scoring: Cost Effectiveness

Section B is worth 30 points.

- Provide data demonstrating cost efficiency.
- Did you serve the number of participants you expected? Was your budget accurate?
- If not, explain result and remediation efforts. *For example,* “Grant target was that 20% of all served would have AMI less than 30%, but we ended up serving 70% with AMI less than 30%, so...”
- For question 2, provide information related to a full year of operations. Programs that are a combination of one or more grants from the prior fiscal year may report on the combined results. Please describe within narrative responses.



Section C is worth 15 points.

1. Did you meet grant requirements (serve target population, follow use of funding regulations, satisfy time criteria, deliver required services)?
2. Straightforward certification, but explain any issue.
3. Grant agreement, including your proposal, is part of overall compliance. Did you follow what you promised in your grant proposal? If not, explain deviation, for example, a correction made in response to an audit finding.



P3 & P4 Application Review Scoring Criteria

Scoring Criteria for Applications Submitted Under Priorities 3 & 4 (New Programs)

Category		Points	Elements
A.	Background, Experience, Qualifications and Past Performance	35	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Background and organizational history• Staff qualifications• Organizational qualifications and past performance• Experience working with Veterans
B.	Program Concept and Supportive Services Plan	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Need for program• Outreach and screening plan• Program concept• Program implementation timeline• Collaboration and communication with VA• Ability to meet VA's requirements, goals, and objectives for the SSVF Program• Capacity to undertake program



P3 & P4 Application Review Scoring Criteria (cont'd)

Scoring Criteria for Applications Submitted Under Priorities 3 & 4 (cont'd)

Category	Points	Elements
C. Quality Assurance and Evaluation Plan	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Program evaluation• Monitoring• Remediation• Management and reporting
D. Financial Capability and Plan	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizational finances• Financial feasibility of program
E. Area and Community Linkages and Relations	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area or community linkages• Past working relationships• Local presence and knowledge• Integration of linkages and program concept



Section A is worth 35 points

- Clearly describe the experience of both your organization and sub-contractors. Include info on types of organizational experiences (ex. SSVF, ESG).
- Describe both breadth of experience, such as years of operation, number served, and success. Remember to demonstrate quality.
- Mention awards, accreditations, area leadership, other funding awards.
- Show that you and your partners have the capacity to meet the need.



Section B is worth 25 points

- VA goal is to end homelessness. Will your efforts help address this in your community?
- Articulate needs based on data, not sentiment.
- How and where do you expect to identify and engage homeless Veterans?
- For the limited funds available for Veteran families under Category 1, how will you serve most vulnerable (justify screening score threshold)? NOTE: Applicants will be required to certify the planned use of the VA approved Homeless Prevention Screening Tool.
- What is your timeline for beginning operations?



Section B Scoring: Program Concept (continued)

- Clearly link described need to program design. What models are you using to provide services (ex., Housing First, Progressive Engagement, etc.) and why?
- What is your experience using these models- *be specific?*
- Demonstrate organizational experience directly and through the use of partners. How will you partner with community stakeholders and participate in Coordinated Entry?



Section C is worth 15 points

- SSVF seeks to exit households to permanent housing and enable them to sustain this housing. What is required to accomplish this?
- Why have you selected the particular measure and target?
- What do you plan to measure? *Hint*: It must be measurable!
- What happens when/if you miss your target? Describe your quality improvement and remediation plan.



Section D is worth 15 points

- What processes do you have in place to ensure oversight and monitoring of expenditures?
- Describe your oversight of sub-contractors, if applicable.
- Include your organization's experience and capacity to manage grants.



Section E Scoring: Community Linkages

Section E is worth 10 points

- Consider methods and environments where you can target those at-risk: housing courts, food pantries, shelters, TANF offices, etc.
- Outreach plan needs to reach entire service area described in application. Role in **Coordinated Entry (coordinated assessment)** must be described.
- Demonstrate how a range of community linkages can produce effective outreach and will provide mandated services.
- Describe your working relationships with VA and other community providers, providing details on extent. Get support letters with specific content.



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II. Funding Opportunity (NOFA Section I)



- Demonstrate adoption of evidence-based practices based on Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks (posted at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp).
- Adoption of practices that are most likely to lead to reductions in homelessness as defined by USICH's Federal Criteria & Benchmarks or Community Solutions' Functional Zero
- Emergency Housing Assistance can be used to transition in place when Section 8 unit is available (voucher already provided). EHA payment cannot exceed rental payment and cannot exceed 45 day limitation.



- ED must certify agency participation in community planning and adherence to RRH Performance Standards. Template letter available on SSVF website.
- Letters of support from VA Network Homeless Coordinator and CoC *strongly encouraged*.
- Failure to provide a CoC support letter that clearly addresses the information described within the NOFA limits the grant to 90% of the possible award amount.
- CoC support letter must contain detail described in NOFA Section II.C.11.



- Housing Specialists
 - Landlord engagement
- Legal Assistance
 - Child support, driver's license, discharging old charges/fines, expungement including sex-offender list
- Income through
 - Employment/vocational support
 - Benefits counseling and assistance, such as SOAR
- Personal financial planning, including credit counseling
- Access to health and mental health services for Veterans not eligible for VHA and family members
 - Note: Direct provision and coordination of health and mental health services is not an allowable SSVF activity



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III. Award Information (NOFA Section II)



Must fully complete application through online system (GIFTS) no later than 4pm EST on February 22, 2019.

*****NO EXCEPTIONS.*****

Priority 1 and Priority 2 Applicants

- Complete application form identified for Renewal Grants

Priority 3 and Priority 4 Applicants

- Complete application form identified for New Grants
- All application materials must be included to be considered. Documents or materials submitted outside of online application submission will not be reviewed.
- All applicants must have a letter signed by Executive Director that agency will actively participate in community planning efforts and operate the rapid re-housing component of their SSVF grant consistent with Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks. Sample template provided by VA on SSVF website.
- **Applicants are encouraged to provide a CoC letter of support that clearly addresses the information described in the NOFA, or limited to 90% of possible award amount.**



Priority 1 and 2 – Use Application For Renewal Grants

Priority 1: Three Year Renewal Consideration

- Grantee demonstrated substantial compliance with grant agreement
- Grantee consistently met program targets including:
 1. Required proportion of resources for rapid re-housing
 2. Successful placement into or retention in permanent housing (allowances given for complexity)
 3. Appropriate expenditure of funding
 4. Timely compliance with data submission requirements, including HMIS uploads
 5. Satisfactorily resolving corrective actions plans; **AND**



Priority 1 and 2 – Use Application For Renewal Grants

Priority 1: Three Year Renewal Consideration

- SSVF Program gets full accreditation by either:
 1. The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for Employment and Community Services – Program accreditation for Rapid Rehousing & Homeless Prevention Standards
 2. The Council on Accreditation (COA) for Housing Stabilization and Community Living Services (HSCL).
 3. The Joint Commission (TJC) – Organizational accreditation for Behavioral Health Care: Housing Support Services Standards

*Accreditation must be attained by NOFA deadline and proof of accreditation submitted with the application.

*Existing multi-year grantees in good standing (with at least one additional year of grant term remaining), only need to submit online form “Intent to Renew” by February 22nd. SSVF Program Office will provide instructions directly to these SSVF grantees. Application submission is not required.

Priority 2: One Year Renewal Consideration



Priority 3 – Use Application for New Grants

- Must serve target CoCs listed in NOFA Section II.B.3
- Only open to existing grantees currently serving target community. (Must still use application for New grants.)
- Funding is 2 years and non-recurring.
- Amount of request cannot exceed limits in NOFA Section II.B.3.
- Awards may be divided between top 2 or 3 scoring applicants.
- Minimum of 60 percent must be spent on TFA.
- Minimum of 70 percent of TFA must be spent on literally homeless Veteran families (Category 2 and 3).
- Only 1 application submission per eligible entity, not per community, under Priority 3.

NOTE: VA is considering an additional rental subsidy option for Priority 3 awards.



Priority 4 – Use Application for New Grants

- Must serve target CoCs listed in NOFA Section II.B.4, however, service area may also include neighboring CoCs.
- Amount of request cannot exceed limits in NOFA Section II.B.4.
- Funding is potentially recurring, subject to Congressional authorization and future renewal application evaluation.
- Minimum of 70 percent of TFA must be spent on literally homeless Veteran families (Category 2 and 3).
- Only 1 application submission per eligible entity, not per community, under Priority 4.



- Renewal applications can request funding that is equal to or less than their current annualized award.
- Unspent or swept funds may result in award reduction.
 - Does not include those returning funds for Federal disaster relief
- Grant sweeps will be conducted quarterly, if spending less than 15% (Q1), 40% (Q2), 65% (Q3).
- Spending cannot exceed 35% (Q1), 60% (Q2), 80% (Q3).
- Failure to submit CoC letter of support that clearly addresses the information described in the NOFA limits grants to 90% of possible award.
- Funding awards may be increased uniformly by up to 2%
 - If increase occurs, budgeted line items will be reassessed during grant agreement process

NOTE: Priority 3 and 4 grant awards will not be subject to sweeps in Q1 & Q2.



- *Initial* accreditation costs are limited in the budget to one try per 5 years.
 - Re-accreditation of fully accredited programs can be budgeted based on respective timelines of CARF, COA, or JC renewals
- Funding for staff training that is not mandated by VA's SSVF Program Office, including associated travel, cannot exceed 1% of total budget.
 - Training costs associated with Rapid Resolution initiative are considered to be mandated and do not count against the 1% cap.



- **Use the correct online application form (per Priority)**
- Answer questions fully, renewals are not automatic – your score matters
- Focus on current grant performance
- Describe program's impact on homelessness
- Where performance could be improved, explain barriers to success and remediation efforts
- Download and prepare any required attachments prior to submission (Budget Template with Resource Allocation per CoC, Certification of Good Standing, Community Planning Self-Certification from Executive Director) and any optional attachments (Letter of Support from CoC and Letter of Support from VA Network Homeless Coordinator (NHC), or designee)



- Follow exact formatting and submission requirements.
- Be sure to answer the questions in the SSVF application.
- Be as specific as possible, providing data (with citations) to support statements on need and services.
- There is limited response space in the application, so be focused. Use program design and data to demonstrate philosophy.



- Must have letter signed by Executive Director that agency will actively participate in community planning efforts and operate the rapid re-housing component of their SSVF grant consistent with Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks. Sample template provided by VA on SSVF website.
- Attachments, such as support letters, do not count against file size limits.
- Letters of support from the CoC and VA are also **strongly encouraged**, but are not required. Specificity greatly enhances value of such letters.



CoC Letter of Support – General Advice

- Methods used to enhance CoC participation may vary among agencies, specifically, among rural and urban communities.
- Applicants are expected to support CoC efforts of building local capacity around CES and to participate in CoC community planning efforts.
- For applicants serving multiple CoCs, a support letter is encouraged from all CoC's served. However, at least one letter from the primary CoC served is acceptable.
- When requesting a support letter, applicants may offer examples of partnership activities, especially when there may be existing limitations of participation (due to geographic characteristics, leadership changes among partners, limited capacity among partners, low-functioning CES, etc.)
- Such limitations do not necessarily equate to poor participation and coordination.



Specificity is key! Examples:

- What level of participation does applicant have with case conferencing, on local Veteran committees, or other working groups that design, test, and continuously improve support services and approaches to ending homelessness?

“[Applicant] is consistently engaged in CoC planning and coordination efforts and is a member of the following CoC Committees and/or other working groups [list committees and working groups].”

“[Applicant] participates in a [weekly/monthly] group that maintains the CoC By-Name-List [or conducts case conferencing, plans outreach, etc.].”

“[Applicant] has worked to implement the Housing First approach on a CoC-wide basis, offering no-cost training within the CoC to community providers on [provide dates of training].”



Specificity is key! Examples:

- How does the applicant utilize the local assessment tool to support coordinated screening and referrals within the CoC?

“[Applicant] is a county/statewide leader in the design and implementation of best practices and innovative solutions to end Veteran homelessness and supports the CoC’s coordinated screening and referrals by using the local assessment tool.”

“Over the past year placements have exceeded projected inflows allowing for an overall reduction in homelessness among Veterans. [Applicant] has made use of inflow projections to work with CoC to allocated resources in the following manner to meet demand [explain allocation] .”



Other considerations as you prepare requests:

- How has the applicant supported CoC resource needs? How have applicant staff positions been utilized in roles related to overall coordinated entry?
- Does the applicant receive prioritized referrals generated from the local CES?
- Does applicant offer targeted outreach, goal-specific, and time-limited individualized services?
- What role does the applicant have in the development of the CoC's by-name list?
- What is the applicant's level and impact of collaboration among other Veteran-serving providers within the continuum, such as SSVF, HUD-VASH, Grant and Per Diem, and the VA?
- **If participation and coordination limitations exist, in what ways has applicant and CoC addressed such issues? What strategies may be in place for improving the participation and coordination efforts among partners?**

***Refer to SSVF NOFA Guidance for CoC Letters of Support on VA SSVF website.**



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

V. Submitting the Application and Required Materials



- Apply using the online application tool available at www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp.
- Recommend existing user account for submission, in order to support population of pre-existing fields.
- There are two application forms for the NOFA – one for Priorities 1 and 2, one for Priorities 3 and 4. Be sure to select the correct form.
- Draft versions of application can be saved, shared, and transferred among grantee accounts. NOTE: Return to drafts via the account login in order to avoid starting a new, blank form.

Please Sign In

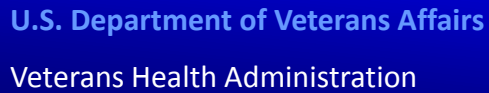
- If you have an account, please log in using your E-mail Address and Password.
- To create an account, please use the "New Applicant" link found below.
- This grant application system uses the following email domain: ssvf@va.gov. Please add it to your safe-senders list to be sure you receive all communications.

E-mail	Password
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
New Applicant?	Forgot Password?



- Required attachments for all applicants
 - Exhibits I, II and III all contained in the SSVF Application Workbook
 - Exhibit I: Budget template
 - Exhibit II: Budget narrative justification
 - Exhibit III: CoC Reference - required resource allocation for applicants proposing to serve multiple CoCs
 - Instructions provided within workbook. Download from SSVF website.
 - Self-Certification from Executive Director regarding community planning efforts (sample template available)
 - Priorities 1 and 2 Only: Copy of Agency Certificate of Good Standing (from State)
 - Priorities 3 and 4 Only: Articles of Incorporation, or By-Laws, and IRS ruling certifying tax-exempt status under the IRS Code of 1986 (private non-profit status)

Letters of support are strongly encouraged but not required.



- **Do not use prior versions.**

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Exhibit I: Application Budget Worksheet

— Conditional Formatting

- Line items under Section 3 (“Other Non-Personnel Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services”)
 - All Training (VA and Other)
 - Accreditation (CARF/COA)
 - » No requirement to allocate funds to these line items
- Line items under Section 4 (“Vehicle Lease Costs”)
 - Actual Lease Cost
 - Maintenance/Mileage Cost
- Conditional Formatting: flags for excess TFA, Admin, Fringe, and vehicle lease costs (allowable but require compliance review by VA)
- Amount Requested in cell C8 linked to total amount budgeted in cell G142.



Linked to
Total Amt
Budgeted

Proposed Funding Information:

Name of Organization:	SSVF Program
Grant ID:	XX-ZZ-XXX
Total Grant Funds Requested:	\$404,482.50
Application Fiscal Year:	FY 2017

Program Expenses		% of Total SSVF Grant	SSVF Grant Funds Total Amount	SSVF Grant Funds FY17 Quarter 1
I. Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services (Minimum of 90% of Total SSVF Grant Amount)				
1. Personnel/Labor	#	%	Base	
Title and Organization	FTE	FTE	Annual	
Case Managers	2.0	100%	35,000.00	24% \$ 96,000.00 \$ 24,000.00
Housing Specialist	1.0	100%	35,000.00	12% \$ 46,800.00 \$ 11,700.00
Program Manager	1.0	100%	45,000.00	15% \$ 60,000.00 \$ 15,000.00
Subtotal Salaries/Wages				50% \$ 202,800.00 \$ 50,700.00
Fringe Benefits				33% \$ 66,307.50 \$ 17,745.00
Subtotal Personnel				67% \$ 269,107.50 \$ 68,445.00
2. Temporary Financial Assistance				24.72% \$ 100,000.00 \$ 25,000.00
3. Other Non-Personnel Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services Expenses				
All Training (VA and Other)				1% \$ 4,000.00 \$ 1,000.00
Accreditation Costs (CARF/COA)				0% \$ 500.00 \$ 500.00
Computers				1% \$ 2,500.00 \$ 2,500.00
Office Space/Lease				4% \$ 14,400.00 \$ 3,600.00
Subtotal Other Program Expenses				5% \$ 22,200.00 \$ 7,800.00

Conditional
Formatting

Conditional
Formatting



Conditional
Formatting



Conditional
Formatting



		# of Vehicles			
4. Vehicle Lease Cost:		1	2%	\$ 7,675.00	\$ 1,900.00
Actual Lease Cost:		1	2%	\$ 7,200.00	\$ 1,800.00
Maintenance/Mileage Cost:			0%	\$ 475.00	\$ 100.00
<u>Subtotal Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services</u>		99%	\$	398,982.50	\$ 103,145.00
II. Administrative Expenses (Maximum of 10% of Total SSVF Grant Amount)					
Accountant		1%	\$	5,500.00	\$ 1,000.00
<u>Subtotal Administrative Expenses</u>		1.36%	\$	5,500.00	\$ 1,000.00
<u>Grand Total</u>		100.00%	\$	404,482.50	\$ 104,145.00
% of Total SSVF Grant				100.0%	25.7%



Populates C6



Exhibit II: Budget Narrative Worksheet

- Must provide budget narrative within the VA provided Excel template
- Linked to Exhibit I Budget Worksheet
- Enter detailed narrative explanations for all line items listed on Exhibit I.
- Justifications are required for all line items, including administrative direct and indirect costs.



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration

Proposed Funding Information:

Name of Organization:	SSVF Program
Grant ID:	XX-ZZ-XXX
Total Grant Funds Requested:	\$404,482.50
Application Fiscal Year:	FY 2017

Program Expenses				% of Total SSVF Grant	SSVF Grant Funds Total Amount	Detailed Narrative Justification
I. Provision and Coordination of Supportive Services (Minimum of 90% of Total SSVF Grant Amount)						
1. Personnel/Labor	#	%	Base Annual			
Title and Organization	FTE	FTE	Salary/Wage			
Case Managers	2	100%	\$ 35,000.00	24%	\$ 96,000.00	
Housing Specialist	1	100%	\$ 35,000.00	12%	\$ 46,800.00	
Program Manager	1	100%	\$ 45,000.00	15%	\$ 60,000.00	
Subtotal Salaries/Wages				50%	\$ 202,800.00	
Fringe Benefits				33%	\$ 66,307.50	



Enter detailed explanation for
each line item (yellow cells)



SSVF Application Budget Workbook

- **General Guidance:**

- Only enter data into the yellow cells.
 - All other cells are locked.
- Include your organization name and current grant ID at the top of the budget worksheet.
- **Do not attempt to unlock or modify this workbook.**

Download this file and other required attachments from
www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp



Exhibit III: Budgeted CoC Resources Worksheet

- Must provide projections for budgeted resources per CoC served
- Renewal applicants should reference the FY 19 CoC resource allocations that were established during FY 19 application and grant resolution process

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	FY19 SSVF Grantee Household and Dollar Projections by CoC												
2	Grant Number												
3	Agency Name												
4	Contact Person												
5	Email												
6	CoCs Served						% of Estimated Spending	Amount of Estimated TFA Budgeted	Estimated # of Prevention Households to Serve	Estimated # of Rapid Re-housing Households to Serve	Total # of Projected Households to be Served	Prevention Threshold Score for CoC	
7													
8													
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21													



**For questions regarding the NOFA applications,
email SSVF@VA.gov.**

**Deadline for application submission is
4:00 PM Eastern Time on February 22, 2019.**

**Access the application and materials from
www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf.asp**